

## D-Park fined for waste violations

By Jim Austin  
Editor

HARTWICK SEMINARY - The Cooperstown Dreams Park has paid a \$50,000 civil penalty levied against it by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation for violations of its wastewater treatment permit.

Last month the DEC and Dreams Park CEO Louis Presutti, III, reached agreement on a Consent Order which spells out the penalty and what the park will have to do to be in compliance with its wastewater permit. The agency assessed a civil penalty of \$80,000, but suspended \$30,000 of the fine conditioned on the Park's compliance with the terms and conditions of the order.

According to the Consent Order, the DEC took the action because of "several unpermitted discharges since the 2004 operating season."

A recent discharge occurred last August while the camp was full of young ballplayers.

The discharge was reported to the DEC by the Otsego County Conservation Association, which was acting on a tip from one Carl Good, of Cooperstown and a member of the OCCA.

"Any time OCCA is notified of a point source contamination, it is our policy to forward those concerns to the appropriate agency, in this case DEC," said OCCA Director Erik Miller in August. "For a number of years, both OCCA and local residents have had concerns about water usage and proper disposal of sewage in the Route 28 corridor, especially in the more developed areas of the corridor."

The incident was also investigated by the NYS Department of Health.

Robert Pierce, Department of Health Oneonta District Director, said the complaint indicated there was raw sewage getting into the river, but it was not near the river and it was not raw sewage. It was effluent that had been through a septic tank and leach field.

There was a wet spot and a little bit of flow, he said.

Pierce said the area was fenced and not accessible to campers at the park. He speculated that the park was putting too much water through its septic system. The Dreams Park, he said, is currently using 67,000 gallons of water a day and most, if not all of it, goes through the treatment system.

The Dreams Park has already installed 20 monitoring wells and must submit all sampling results to the DEC. The park must also:

- submit a set of plans showing the location of all subsurface disposal systems, monitoring wells, pump stations, property lines and water supply wells,
- provide the DEC with a comprehensive evaluation of the groundwater, including an evaluation of water quality based on sample results and a characterization of groundwater flow across the site, and
- provide a closure plan for five of the wastewater outfalls. The outfalls must be closed by May 31, 2008.

The wastewater problem at the Dreams Park may be an indication that municipalities in the county need to take the environment more seriously when reviewing development proposals, Miller said.

"The concerns related to the potential contamination of the Susquehanna River are many. The Susquehanna is a valuable natural resource that we should treat as our front yards not our dumping grounds," he said.

Calls to the Dreams Park's Salisbury, N.C. office were not returned.